

#### **4. SURVEY OPERATIONS AND METHODOLOGY**

The development of the HIES began during the first week of June 1991. At this time, Michael Levin (PD), Alonso Joseph (OPS), and Francesca Sukuma (OPS) designed questionnaires, manuals, and training materials, selected sample houses to include in the survey, and prepared lists of householders. Project staff photocopied all enumeration materials during June and July, to provide each enumerator with the forms and maps necessary for the HIES. The main survey instruments consisted of a household questionnaire, which enumerators used to record information on demographic, social, and economic characteristics, as well as major and regular expenditures; and Daily Expenditures Diaries, which subjects used to record daily purchases and subsistence consumption over a two-week period. Each selected diary household completed diaries for two consecutive weeks in July 1991.

HIES personnel included two groups of enumerators -- one trained for Koror and Airai states (the most densely populated states in Palau) and one for the remaining states included in the survey (all states on Babeldaob Island north of Airai, and Kayangel, Peleliu, and Angaur states). After a three-

day training period, each enumerator received a workload of 10 to 15 households. Before working on the HIES all enumerators swore an oath of *strict confidentiality* before the Chief Justice of the Palau Supreme Court, ensuring that they would not disclose any matter learned through their employment on the project.

The 1991 HIES employed the following schedule:

- @ July 1 - 3 Training of enumerators
- @ July 4 - Collection of income information,  
August 15 and annual and major expenditures
- @ July 10-13 Distribution of Week 1 diaries
- @ July 15-21 Week 1 survey period for household expenditures
- @ July 19-20 Distribution of Week 2 diaries
- @ July 22-23 Collection of Week 1 diaries, checking them
- @ July 22-28 Week 2 survey period for household expenditures
- @ July 28-29 Collection of Week 2 diaries, checking them
- @ August 23 Main period of data collection ends
- @ October 15 Period of supplemental data collection ends

Staff from the OPS acted as supervisors on this project and were responsible for all enumerators. In addition to helping enumerators locate and gain the cooperation of selected households, supervisors also checked the work of enumerators during the survey period. Senior project personnel trained supervisors before the survey started, to ensure that they understood all concepts.

Enumerators conducted most HIES interviews in Palauan, to increase respondent cooperation and understanding. Enumerators similarly instructed selected households in the completion of Daily Expenditures Diaries in Palauan. Senior project personnel trained the enumerators in English.

Most of the coding occurred in October and November 1991. The Micronesian Occupational College (MOC) provided eight coders as part of a work-study program for a period of two weeks. The MOC personnel coded results from both the general questionnaire and the diaries, with the exception of industry and occupation responses which OPS supervisors coded. Senior project personnel developed most of the code lists -- relationship to householder, place of birth, etc. -- for the 1991 HIES of Palau. The occupation and industry codes, in contrast, were the same as those used for the 1990 census of Palau, to ensure comparability. Similarly, the food and non-food diary expenditures codes were the same as those used in the U.S. for its expenditures surveys. Project personnel developed about twenty additional codes for items that appear in Palau but not in the U.S., such as aus (lime), betelnut, and fruit bat. Appendix 4 of this report contains all codes employed in the HIES.

Data checks occurred at several stages in the collection and compilation process to help minimize errors. Interviewers checked their own work, supervisors checked the work of interviewers in their charge, and project personnel checked data during coding and data entry. All computer processing of the HIES data used the Integrated Microcomputer Processing System (IMPS), developed by the ISPC. Rigorous editing of the computerized database, to minimize interviewing, coding, and data entry error, employed the IMPS program CONCOR. Project personnel resolved queries in the data by examining the original documents and contacting enumerators and respondents.